



The VOCAL minions made another guest appearance at the launch of the Edinburgh Carers' Hub appeal launch on 24 November to mark Carers' Rights Day.

Edinburgh's Carer Champion Cllr Joan Griffiths (front), Jan-Bert van den Berg and Ella Simpson of the Third Sector Strategy Group and EVOC joined carers, VOCAL staff and volunteers to launch the appeal to raise £100,000 towards the refurbishment of the new Edinburgh Carers' Hub at 60 Leith Walk. Find out more about the appeal in the enclosed brochure or visit: vocal.org.uk/edinburghcarershub

Investing in carers in 2018

In a New Year Message to Edinburgh Council and NHS, VOCAL is calling for more creative ways of partnership working for the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act from April 2018.

In a letter to elected members, VOCAL calls for a second phase of 'integration' – one which places the third sector and voluntary organisations at the heart of planning, commissioning and service provision.

The Carers Act offers a unique opportunity to test this with Edinburgh's carer organisations by:

- **Commissioning carer organisations to undertake all new Adult Carer Support Plans**
Carers overwhelmingly prefer carer organisations to help them plan for the future. Our agencies are carer-led, more person-centred and thus better placed than statutory services to produce better outcomes more quickly, less costly and without red tape.
- **Devolving carer support funds and other budgets to third sector organisations**
Carer organisations are closer to people, more transparent, less bureaucratic and more flexible to ensure money reaches those in need. We raise additional income and evidence social return on investment better than local authorities or the NHS.

- **Minimising eligibility criteria for carer support**
Just like the paid workforce, unpaid carers are providers of care, not users of services. Their care is estimated to save the city £800 million a year. Eligibility criteria for support should be the minimum compatible with the Carers Act. We call on the IJB to work with VOCAL to minimise the bureaucracy of eligibility and maximise quick and effective delivery of support to those in greatest need.

Jointly with Edinburgh's Third Sector Strategy Group, VOCAL also calls for a public review of competitive tendering with the aim to adopt new partnership models for genuine co-production.

"Competitive tendering has not served Edinburgh citizens well, on the contrary. It has deliberately set local charities against each other in competition rather than forging true collaboration through more inclusive models of commissioning," says VOCAL's Chief Executive, Sebastian Fischer.

Many thanks to all carers who completed the 2017 VOCAL carer survey. We have had just over 1,300 responses making it the biggest ever survey of carers in Lothian! The reports will be published in late January 2018.

Caring in the city - reaching 6,500 carers in Edinburgh

ABOUT VOCAL

VOCAL supports carers in all family or relationship settings, be they defined by kinship, partnership, friendship, affection or obligation.

What do we do?

Carers can access the following:

- Information & advice
- Individual support
- Legal & financial surgeries
- Training & groupwork
- Social & leisure opportunities
- Family Support (Addictions)
- Carer counselling service

Connect with VOCAL:



Email:

centre@vocal.org.uk



Website:

www.vocal.org.uk



Twitter:

@EdinburghCarers



Facebook:

www.facebook.com/
VOCALCarers

VOCAL Carer Centres

VOCAL Edinburgh Carer Centre

8 - 13 Johnston Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2PW
Tel: 0131 622 6666

VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre

30/1 Hardengreen Estate
Dalhousie Road, Dalkeith
EH22 3NX
Tel: 0131 663 6869

Additional services:

Family Support

Addictions (FSA) 0131 622 6262

Counselling 0131 466 8082

South Edinburgh 0131 672 0987

South West Edin 0131 453 9457

VOCAL is an active member of the Coalition of Carers in Scotland and is affiliated to Carers Scotland, Shared Care Scotland and Eurocarers.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

Dear carers

Happy New Year to all our readers and supporters!

2018 will bring many new developments for carers and for VOCAL. Coinciding with the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act in April 2018, VOCAL is celebrating a major investment in a new Carers Centre. The new, state-of-the-art Carers' Hub at 60 Leith Walk will be well connected digitally and with much improved transport links to help VOCAL reach every carer home in every part of the city.

To modernise the 200-year old former Leith GP practice, VOCAL has launched a major appeal to raise funds for refurbishments and disabled access.

"Every donation from £5 to £5,000 will be an investment in carers and carer health and wellbeing!" says our Partnership Development Officer, Francesca Greaves.

Council leader Cllr. Adam McVey and Carer Champion Cllr. Joan Griffiths have already given their support to the development:

"VOCAL has an impressive track record in the Capital and we are delighted VOCAL has been able to bring a fantastic new support hub to Leith. The centre will provide crucial help to carers and what better way to mark the implementation of the Carers Act than to donate to this project!"

This is a milestone development for carers in Edinburgh. Carers and supporters can contribute in many ways, not just by donation, but also by acting as an ambassador for VOCAL and helping to inform others about this development.

To contribute to VOCAL's appeal, please visit the VOCAL website:

www.vocal.org.uk/edinburghcarershub

Please help spread the word to family and friends with our appeal booklet in this mailing.

Thank you for all your help and support!

Patrick Layden, Convener



Cllr Joan Griffiths and VOCAL CEO Sebastian Fischer at the launch of the Edinburgh Carers' Hub appeal.

Carers' Allowance increase in 2018

Carers' Allowance will increase to £73.10 per week for carers in Scotland from April 2018.

If you think you may be eligible please apply now so that you benefit from the increase. Visit gov.uk/carers-allowance to apply online or make an appointment at one of VOCAL's benefit surgeries - email centre@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 622 6666 to book an appointment.

Local support and events for carers in 2018



Carer Cathy Owens (pictured left) came along to one of the 2017 events. She told us:

"I had seen VOCAL promote these events many times and wasn't exactly sure what they were but as it was on my doorstep, I thought I would pop in to see what they were all about.

"I was so surprised by what was on offer. I attended a stress management workshop, found out more about dementia from Alzheimers' Scotland and made an appointment with Home Energy Scotland for someone to come to my home to look at a broken thermostat.

I can't emphasise enough how glad I was I went, there is so much under one roof. I would urge all carers reading this to pop into one in 2018, it can make a real difference just to know what's on your doorstep."

Carers are welcome to drop in on the day or register your interest with Gurjit at gpanesar@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 662 6666.

There are three Caring in the City events for carers in the first half of the 2018:

- Wednesday 7th February at Boroughmuir Rugby Club
- Wednesday 14th March at Queensferry Sport and Community Hub
- Friday 15th June at St Colombas Church, City Centre.

Put the kettle on! New carer cafe for South Queensferry from Jan 2018

Carers in the north west of Edinburgh and South Queensferry area are invited to a new Carer Conversation Cafe starting in the New Year.

Since VOCAL launched the Conversation Cafes in October 2016 in Edinburgh, they have developed a core of regular members as well as new carers joining the groups. Each week a different topic is discussed with the aim of providing a space for carers to express their own ideas and opinions, and share their experience and knowledge with each other.

Join us to kick off the first session on Tuesday 30 Jan 2018 at 10am at The Little Bakery, 6-7 High St, South Queensferry, then monthly on the last Tuesday of the month.

Find out more at vocal.org.uk/conversation

New debt advice surgeries for carers

VOCAL is delighted to offer new debt advice surgeries for carers from January 2018, in partnership with the Salvation Army Debt Advice Service.

The surgeries are free, confidential and open to carers who live in Edinburgh and Midlothian and will be held at the VOCAL Edinburgh Carer Centre on the fourth Thursday of the month from January 2018.

To book an appointment, please speak to your carer support worker, contact VOCAL at centre@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 622 6666.

Local group and individual support for carers in SW Edinburgh

VOCAL Carer Support Worker Emma has moved in to the brand new Allermuir Health Centre on Colinton Mains Drive to provide more local support Monday to Friday for carers in the South West of Edinburgh.

The Health Centre houses many services such as GP practices, Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists and District Nurses.

From 11th January 2018 Emma will also be running weekly craft sessions at Currie Library from 11:30am – 1:00pm.

To contact Emma or find out about the new craft groups email epattinson@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 312 2143.



Do you have a passion for holidays, breaks and leisure time or experience in the hospitality, tourism or leisure industry?



Combine your passion with a new and exciting volunteering role at VOCAL!

VOCAL are looking for volunteers to support our exciting new Respality project - working in partnership with the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector to provide, co-ordinate and manage breaks and days trips for local carers.

If you can offer a minimum of 5 hours a week and have skills such as administration, event management, sales, telephone handling or marketing, we would love to hear from you.

For more information please contact Hayley at hburton@vocal.org.uk or call her on 0131 622 6666.

Do you have some spare time to help VOCAL move?

VOCAL is looking for some willing volunteers to help prepare for our move out of Johnston Terrace. If you have a little time you could spare it would be lovely to hear from you.

For further details please email Lesley at centre@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 622 6666.

Carers programme at the Eric Liddell centre

The Ca(i)re programme at the Eric Liddell centre has been renamed the 'Carers Programme' for 2018. Here's what's on offer in the new year:

- Tuesdays 10.30am-12.30pm (9 Jan - 13th March 2018): Gentle Exercise/Qi Gong with Hazel Moffatt.
- Fridays from 2-3pm: Mindfulness drop-in with Dr Avinash Bansode - all levels welcome.
- Coffee afternoons with live music, creative activities and individual help with information on hand. Dates for 2018 to be announced very soon - please get in touch.
- Carer outings – monthly day trips to local venues for carers and the person you care for to relax and do something different.
- Self Directed Support (SDS): Information and support for carers who are thinking about or managing SDS.

To find out more or book a session or outing, please contact Anna at reida@ericliddell.org or call 0131 446 3321.

Do you have a partner or spouse with Asperger Syndrome?

CLASPS (Carers in Lothian with Asperger Syndrome Partners and Spouses) is a new group for partners and spouses of adults with AS. The group provides peer support, informal discussions, information sessions, or contributions from a range of professional expert. Most importantly, it is a safe space for partners to talk about the impact of an AS relationship on their own mental and physical well-being and to consider their own needs, as well as those of children and other family members.

The group meets on the first Thursday of the month from 6.30pm -8.30pm. If you would like to know more or are interested in attending, please contact Jane Greenacre at jgreenacre@vocal.org.uk or call her on 0131 622 6666.

If you would like to update or remove your details, or would like your name added to VOCAL's mailing list to receive Carers News, then complete this form and return to: FREEPOST RTJZ-RBZT-LHGH, VOCAL, 8-13 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2PW

Title: Name:

Add

Address:

Remove

Previous address (if updating):

Update

Postcode: Tel: Email:

Condition of person being cared for:

Relationship to person being cared for:

The information provided in this form will be stored on VOCAL's database. This will allow us to let carers know about events, training and other relevant opportunities. We may occasionally contact carers by telephone. We will add carers to VOCAL's carer email list. We will not share any personal information with a third party unless required to do so and will always seek to obtain consent first. Information is regularly checked to ensure it is accurate and up to date. If you wish to view the information we hold about you or if you wish your details to be removed, please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666 or email centre@vocal.org.uk. Please tick here if you do not wish VOCAL to do this